

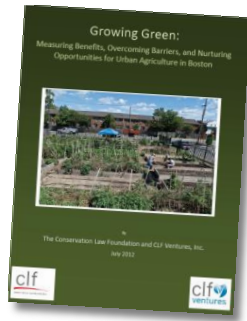
Urban Agriculture Policy & Planning



Jennifer Rushlow
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CONSERVATION LAW FOUNDATION

RESOURCES





Growing Green:

Measuring Benefits, Overcoming Barriers, and Nurturing
Opportunities for Urban Agriculture in Boston
(2012)

<http://www.clf.org/growing-green/>

The promise of urban agriculture

With just 50 acres, Boston could...

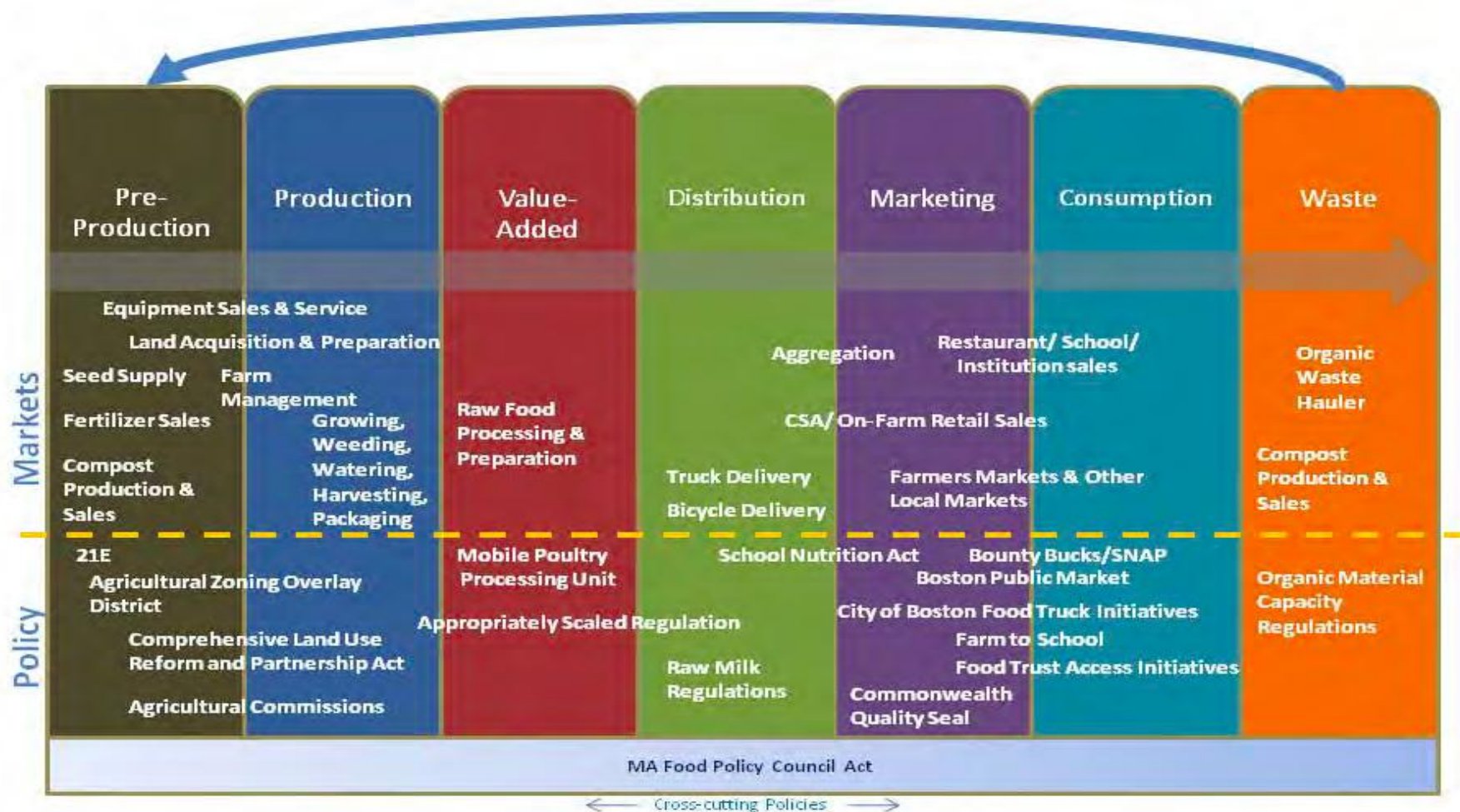


Imagine what is possible around New England.

Communities. Jobs. Local food. Better health. Carbon reduction.

For the full study, visit:
www.clf.org/growing-green/

Policy Barriers and Opportunities: How we did it





Municipal Food Systems Planning Toolkit for MAPC Communities

CLF Ventures
*Metropolitan Area
Planning Council*

Joanna Hamilton, Liz Carver, Jasmine Tanguay
CLF Ventures, Inc.

Julie Conroy
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Essential information to begin or expand
municipal efforts to improve local food systems.

http://www.mapc.org/sites/default/files/Food_system_guide_3-18-14.pdf



CLF Role in Urban Ag Policy/Planning

Urban Ag Policy Expertise

- *Community partner:*

- Work with community members to assess needs
- Propose policy changes/Advocate for community policy positions

- *City partner:*

- Work with municipalities to assess policy and planning opportunities
- Share best practices from other municipalities
- Assess community engagement needs

- **Examples:**

- Burlington VT – Assist Urban Ag Working Group
- New Haven, CT - Assist Food Policy Council
- Cambridge, MA – Assist Task Force

CASE STUDIES





Burlington, VT: Background

- Burlington Food Council
 - Formed in 2003
 - “To provide the connective tissue between disparate nonprofit organizations, volunteers and government agencies”
- Urban Ag Task Force
 - Citizen-led group
 - Charged with “recommending to the City Council a cohesive urban agriculture policy, improved rules and regulations addressing urban agriculture and steps to better promote urban agriculture in Burlington.”
 - Sept. 2012 - Report submitted to City Council
 - City Council charged Board of Health and Planning Board with developing regs



Burlington: Task Force Report

Recommended policy improvements:

- City Food Office
- Burlington Food Charter
- Urban ag general ordinance
- Zoning changes

What's happening:

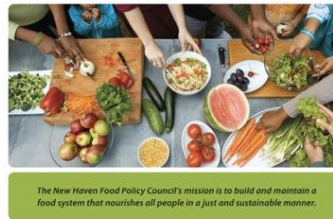
- City Council adopted zoning code changes, *e.g.*:
 - Curbside garden stand - People can sell produce/value-add from their home without a permit up to \$1000/year
 - Allow farmers markets almost everywhere in City
 - Density bonus for development creating garden space
 - Allow larger agricultural structures (e.g., small greenhouses)
 - Rooftop gardens as of right
- Considering changes to Health ordinance



New Haven, CT: Background



New Haven Food Action Plan



- 2005 - New Haven Food Policy Council created by city ordinance.
- Role: “strengthens the local food system through strategic connections.”
- 2012- Food Action Plan
- Working groups on specific topics:
 - To drive implementation of Food Action Plan
 - Food assistance, urban agriculture (community + backyard gardens, school gardens), cooking + food education, economic development + food business, compost, school food.



New Haven: Food Action Plan

Goals:

- Increase access to healthy food
 - Land use component: backyard and community gardens
- Strengthen local food economy
 - Streamline the processes needed to create urban farm businesses
 - Vacant land acquisition
 - Improve zoning and health codes
- Encourage healthy food choices





New Haven: Comp. Plan



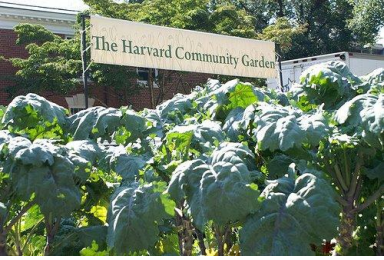
- Planning Dept. requested proposed changes from Food Policy Council, (goals and strategies).
- Council developed proposed language for revised Comp. Plan, *e.g.*:
 - Creating parameters for siting of fast food businesses.
 - Increasing commercial urban ag in New Haven through zoning changes.
 - Supporting green infrastructure projects to manage stormwater, decrease the heat island effect, reduce food miles traveled, and increase biodiversity.



Cambridge: Urban Ag Task Force



- 2013: City Council ordered creation of ordinance.
- Food and Fitness Policy Council Urban Ag Workgroup named official Task Force.
- Task force collecting input on ordinance from stakeholders and city departments.
- Planning a public “listening session.”
- Developing ordinance drafts for each category, will seek input from stakeholders.
- Task force supported by grant; also receiving assistance from CLF.



Cambridge: Urban Ag Task Force



- Task Force Ordinance Recommendations:
 - Residents and commercial enterprises can grow and sell products.
 - Allows network of food sources in Cambridge to promote food access, economic development, aligned with climate and resiliency planning.
 - Clear guidelines about allowable practices.

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